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UNCLAS VILNIUS 000410

SIPDIS

Dept for EUR/NB
FRANKFURT FOR RCO - BARBARA ARMSTRONG

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [CVIS](#) [PGOV](#) [OVIP](#) [LH](#)
SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISA WAIVER PROGRAM ROADMAP FOR
LITHUANIA

REF(S): A) STATE 067069 B) STATE 026010 C) 04 STATE

172283

1. After consulting with Vaidotas Verba, Director of the MFA's Consular Department, we wish to propose the following draft visa waiver program roadmap, which is based on the roadmap the USG announced last February with Poland. We request urgent approval of this proposed roadmap so that it may be announced before the Secretary's visit to Vilnius April 20 and 21.

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2. Begin text: The Government of the United States and the Lithuanian government recognize the continued close and fruitful cooperation of the U.S. Embassy in Vilnius and Ministry of Foreign Affairs on consular issues. As a demonstration of our commitment to deepen our countries' ties of friendship, we agree on the following Visa Roadmap of reciprocal steps so that Lithuania can take the steps needed to qualify for potential future participation in the Visa Waiver Program. The Lithuanian government reiterates its commitment to complete the program's prerequisites, while the Government of the United States commits to offer technical advice and assistance.

-- The U.S. Embassy and the Lithuanian government commit to establish a formal Consular Working Group that will meet regularly to discuss work on the roadmap.

-- The Lithuanian government commits to meet biometric and other technical and security criteria of VWP.

-- The U.S. Embassy in Vilnius commits to review the assumptions under which the Consular Section applies criteria for tourist and business visas in light of the improving economic conditions in Lithuania as a result of EU membership.

-- The United States and Lithuania agree to cooperate in conducting in 2006 a new baseline study of tourist visa non-adjusted overstay rates based on 2005 data.

-- The Lithuanian government, in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy, commit to launch a public campaign urging their citizens not to overstay or otherwise abuse their tourist visas.

-- The United States agrees to offer the government of Lithuania technical advice, training and assistance as feasible.

-- The United States and Lithuania commit to review periodically the progress made toward meeting the legislative criteria for the Visa Waiver Program. End Text.

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